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ABSTRACT

Some of the activities involved in university staff development are discussed in this speech. Trends toward larger institutions, greater accountability of students, and greater cost effectiveness are cited as influences on institutional changes. Those changes include new legal issues, new management skills, new courses and new approaches to teaching, and changes in the student body. All of these issues must be considered in staff development programs. The Staff Development in Universities program, a project of the University of London Institute of Education, is described. Comments are provided on the purposes, methods, organization, and financing of staff training and development. (SPG)

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University of London Institute of Education

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THE LONGER REACH

The opening paper of a conference
on university staff development, April 1974

David Warren Piper
University of London Institute of Education

'Mine was the distant aim, the longer reach,
To teach men how to teach men how to teach.'

A.B. Ramsay
'Epitaph on a Syndic'

Introduction

In this paper I will describe some of the activities which make up the Staff Development in Universities programme. I hope in so doing to raise a number of general points pertinent to the theme of this conference: staff training and development in Universities and Polytechnics. After a brief introduction to the S.D.U. programme I will comment on the purposes, methods, organisation, and financing of staff training and development. What I mean by staff development I will explain later in the paper. I mean most of what I say to refer to both academic and administrative staff. I think it will be self evident where I am mentioning matters which apply only to problems of high level academic teaching. For the rest I must leave you to make the necessary conversion where time allows me to write in terms of only one.

In 1972 the University Grants Committee awarded 19 grants totalling £130,000 for work on university staff training. A good proportion of the work done on those projects is represented at this conference. Two of those grants were received within the Institute of Education: one by the Department of Educational Administration for developing a programme for middle and senior grade university administrators. The other, received by the University Teaching Methods Unit, carried a three clause brief:

> 1) Our central concern should be training needs arising from changes expected in universities in the years immediately ahead. (We have taken this to mean within the next ten to fifteen years.)
>
> 2) We should pay particular attention to the interaction between academic and administrative staff.
>
> 3) We should concern ourselves exclusively with senior staff which is interpreted as professorial rank and above for academics and assistant registrar grade and above for administrators.

Concerned with different, although overlapping staff categories, the interests of the two Institute projects appeared to be similar; so we combined forces to form the Staff Development in Universities programme, with myself and Ron Glatter as joint programme organisers.

We quickly added a fourth clause to our brief: that we should work from problems of change which universities joining our programme were facing, rather than from an elegant theoretical appreciation of the problems of innovation and the place of universities in a modern society.

We began by canvassing senior university staff for their opinions as to what were the major changes upon which their universities were about to embark and which carried an implication of a need for staff to learn something. From the answers to our initial inquiry we gleaned twenty-six (what by then we called) problems. A discussion of these twenty-six by a collection of senior academics and administrators closeted in a country house for two days produced more.

I will not itemise them all here, but it is perhaps worthwhile to identify a number of trends which bring these problems, with us all the time, to prominence.

Trends and Changes

The first is a trend to larger institutions. Some universities are expanding very rapidly. This brings with it a need to formalise procedures which in a small institution can be done informally. Committees abound, requiring committee skills; budgetary procedures become more complex, requiring formulae for distributing funds rather than informed (and humanitarian) guesswork; personal contact has to be replaced by consciously pursued principles of good man management; and thought has to be given to how a person is to learn about the job into which he or she is later to move, as in a complicated organisation job boundaries become more marked and thus the work less accessible to those not already filling the post.

The second is a trend towards greater accountability for the use of resources, partly because most of it is public money, partly because more has to be done with less. Resources must now be allocated more skilfully, and their use accounted for and justified more punctiliously. This calls for financial and managerial expertise, both within central administration and within departments.

Perhaps it calls also for an even closer working between academics and administration than one is apt sometimes to find. Scarcity of funds and a reliance on public monies inevitably exposes political issues. If one department is to expand then another must be contracted, a policy decision perhaps with national implications, but in any event a decision difficult for an organisation governed by representative committees to achieve. Also if the universities have to compete more openly with other sectors of public expenditure then also they are more openly involved in national political argument. Some have concluded, notably Lord Annan, that because of this more staff must be familiar with the workings of the Department of Education and Science and the University Grants Committee. Although how anybody becomes familiar with the workings of these two inscrutable institutions without actually being in charge of them I cannot imagine.

The third trend is towards a greater accountability to the student and to bodies outside the teaching institution for what is to be taught and for the standard of teaching. Most of the increased public expenditure on higher education has been expressly for the purpose of meeting demands for educational courses. There is more insistent and more open clamour that the authority of the teacher should rest where at best it has always lain, in his mastery of that which interests his students, rather than where sadly it too easily takes refuge, in the senior common room and examining board.

These along with other forces have brought a growing acceptance that expertise in educational planning and in teaching does not arise from nor can be wholly compensated for by a mastery in an academic discipline or a profession. In 1961 Desmond Furneaux wrote "..... the amateur contributes much that is best in the British way of life, and this is particularly true in those fields of activity which are really important like cricket and university education. The headmaster of a school is the professional par excellence, and the majority of his activities are concerned with matters in connection with which he has received special training. By comparison the university professor finds that he is required to select students without having been offered training

in selection techniques, to lecture to them without having been trained in methods of teaching, and to examine them without having been instructed in the techniques of examination. Perhaps he cannot strictly be called an amateur in respect of these activities for it can seldom be said that he is impelled to their performance by love, or that they are not required of him as part of his professional duties. Neither can he usually be classified as an expert."(1)

There are legal changes. Some universities and colleges are including a commitment to training in their terms of employment. We have yet to witness a probationary lecturer contesting in court his employers' right to dismiss him without having made reasonable provision for training him, but it may only be a matter of time before ripples from the Industrial Training Act lap upon our shores.

There are changes in the student body. It is not only that more means different: the less-than-majestic shift into cross-disciplinary courses, urgently made by some departments with falling admissions, is a salutary reminder that we teach pure disciplines under licence from the taught and that, even in academe, inducement to change springs not only from persuasive philosophic argument. If the diagnosis of a need for a greater provision of places for mature students, some of them women with families, is correct, then they too will not be served by the same kind of course we give to school leavers.

On top of these needs for new procedures, new management skills, new courses and new approaches to teaching, come the problems of change itself. How does one successfully introduce a major change into a dynamic organisation; how do I help my colleagues change their ways; how do I learn to embrace new, less safe, ways myself?

It is tempting to perceive in all that two areas of learning to which the academic must attend. Those things which may loosely be considered as 'management' (matters of organisational structure, financial procedures, negotiations with staff) and those things which we can label teaching (how does one assess common ground between courses in terms of the general intellectual abilities the student develops, rather than in terms of subject matter, as a prelude to combining them in a joint course; the question

(1) W.D. Furneaux, The Chosen Few, The Nuffield Foundation, Oxford University Press, 1961

of good lecturing technique; practising, with some teaching purpose, the skills of group discussion).

A moment's more thought however will show these to be not at all separate; that one cannot be considered without the other; and that to separate them as 'subjects' to be learned by the university teacher would be to impoverish both seriously. Teaching method leads to course planning, leads to departmental organisation, leads to management. Managing students is managing people.

Paradigms

Management and teaching have much in common. Both words falsely suggest one person doing something to another; both describe exceedingly complex operations in which the number of critical variables are of such a nature and in such quantity that experiments designed according to the traditional scientific paradigm do not provide instances from which generalisation may be made with certainty unless the matter under analysis is so confined in scope as to be of very limited value to the practising manager or teacher. For instance one may demonstrate experimentally the variability in the speed with which a person acquires a particular simple skill with practice (that is the shape of a learning curve) but that person's learning curve will vary in particular not only according to the nature of the task and his previous experience, but will vary in himself from time to time for reasons which are not at all apparent. In any case we hardly ever require a student to acquire a single simple skill and, if we do, then it is not under the very peculiar circumstances of the learning psychologist's laboratory. Experiments which seek to deal directly with more complex matters cannot but fail to hold the variables - there are too many that we can think of, and doubtless many more that we cannot. A comparison of examination marks of two groups of students, one group denied access to lectures, the other not, does not tell us whether or not lectures are a good thing. It might remind us to speculate on what exams measure or what myriads of reasons there are for which a student will work hard, but we should only need the reminder if our 'scientific' training has been rigorous enough. We might demonstrate that a

teaching method works well for a particular purpose, but it might not work so well with a different teacher, or different students, or the same teacher after he has been doing it for twenty years, or the same students after they have experienced some alternative.

Of course we all know that prescriptions do not work in management of teaching, yet many people seem to assume that our Unit and our work is based on that supposition. If they embrace the supposition themselves they ask the impossible of us and go away disappointed ("Show me how to write objectives"). If they reject it, they dismiss our work or attack our existence on a false premise. I wonder how many eductionalists experience the same frustrations?

If generalisation from experiments is not a sufficient answer, then with what must we supplement it? The strategy I offer and that upon which much of the S.D.U. work is based is, and here I paused for a word and came up with 'education'. Or so I call it, for it is a strategy designed, like education, to help each individual to be more self-reliant. And here I adopt a premise - the same premise which you may think lies behind the best of all higher education - that whatever else it may have self-sufficiency has three types of intellectual content.

They are:

1) An ever-growing variety of ways of perceiving a situation, or an event, or a complex thing. And a determined attempt to use each percept, model, schema, metaphor, analogy, in a conscious way, evaluating the means by which we arrive at what we believe to be the fact.

2) A widening repertoire of reactions that can be made to those percepts or analyses with conscious appreciation or an elative sense of the basis of choice from that repertoire in each particular instance.

3) An ever-enriching variety of ways of evaluating a choice from the repertoire against the various percepts.

'Ways of perceiving'

I will elaborate and illustrate with practical examples those three (what I suppose to be) aspects of self-reliance. The first, 'ways of perceiving', seems to me the most difficult, the most interesting, the most important, and when applied to the task of teaching is ultimately what gives a unit such as ours a rightful place in an academic department of Higher Education. It requires that we shall seek to use self-consciously ways of understanding things, rather than just understand them. It demands that we aspire to think and teach, not only by the means of our beliefs, but also about our beliefs, lest we should unthinkingly regard them as unassailable facts.

Some of the psychological descriptions of the more practical aspects of learning, such as the effect of immediacy in giving knowledge of results, the concept of over-learning, the idea of transfer of training, are models which can give the lecturer one way of interpreting the effect of his teaching on a student's learning. Far from providing recipes they provide at best rather limited guides to good practice. The concept of over-training does not prescribe when we should stop practising, except to say it is worth carrying on after all the indications of which we are aware suggest something has been 'learned'. Some principles even conflict; that is not to say that such principles are useless. They do enrich the repertoire of interpretation available to a teacher, but it remains a matter of judgement as to which principle is apt at any particular moment.

Writing educational objectives, an approach to educational planning often associated with the work of the University Teaching Methods Unit, employs a seemingly military metaphor to describe the process of learning as one of gaining and consolidating ground. The metaphor has its uses but also its limitations (not all educative experience can be seen as a means to an end) and its dangers. The danger of metaphors lies in what they smuggle in with them: it is but a short step from fashioning an educational objective to unintentionally treating it as though it existed independent of the learner, as land exists before and after the soldier has captured it. Thus the need to employ metaphors knowingly; and most are rather more difficult to crack than the last example. What assumptions were

made when our predecessors left us the word 'develop' - what is it exactly that exists before it is unveiled? I have a sneaking suspicion that even the word 'teach' which for generations has lulled us into believing that a simple passage of something from one person to another is all that is involved, was, in some distant time, a metaphor drawing on some mystic initiation rite.

Freudian theory, systems theory, the sociology of the class-room, our personal construct of our specialist subject, all provide different ways of interpreting the progress or development of our students. We do not have to choose between them, quite the contrary, the more we can employ, manipulate, surrender to (hear the metaphors) the greater our chance of thinking of something else to do when what we have tried palpably fails. That is nothing new; now that I have said it I dare say that there is not a person here to whom that is a revelation - but why do we behave as though we have to choose between ways of looking at things? Why do we so often reject a word or concept as totally useless because it is associated with an ethic we would prefer to avoid? For instance I have used the word 'management'. Doing so in the context of a university usually raises hackles before it raises problems. I understand the associations the word has, and I shrink from them as much as any sensitive academic; but what untainted word is there which covers making decisions, running things, and helping other people?

'Repertoire of reactions'

The second ingredient of self-reliance is a widening repertoire of reactions. An example would be a university teacher having more than one way of describing or teaching a particular topic. If one approach does not meet with success he has others at the ready. Such fall-back strategies may occur readily to the teacher in small particulars (such as the way he answers a question) within a teaching session but the same principle applies in respect of teaching methods. A person whose teaching method is confined to lecturing and the occasional issue of a book list is a limited teacher who could with advantage increase his range to include group discussions, projects, discovery techniques, or programmed exercises.

Many lecturers who come to us see their learning needs as being primarily of this kind. It is relatively easy for us to respond to their requests: we can give people practice in lecturing, in running group discussions and in methods for setting about the planning of a course. The problem is that each of these methods is of itself an empty procedure, it only becomes potent to the extent that the teacher is advanced in the first area. At the very least he needs some insight into how the subject looks from the learners' viewpoint; and that is not always easy for an expert in a subject. Holt in his book 'How Children Fail'(2) gives an example of how wide the gulf can be between teacher and taught, which is so compelling that I quote it (from memory) rather than give an illustration from an undergraduate class.

Holt observed a class of young children completing a test which they then marked themselves. One child got the first few questions right, then got one wrong, and then the rest right. Normally that would have been the end of the matter but Holt asked 'Why did you get that one wrong?' 'Ah,' said the child, 'They always put in one that is wrong about there.'

To return to my main point, one of our dilemmas is presented by the teacher who sees his own learning needs only in terms of his repertoire of techniques. Each year at our Introductory Course for lecturers we meet people who are very anxious about their ability to give a lecture, run a seminar or plan a course. It is important that they gain the confidence that comes from being at home on the rostrum, knowing that people can hear and that a good proportion of their audience will remain reasonably alert to them. But it is impossible to consider a lecture only at the mechanical level without trivialising the job of undergraduate teaching or at best emphasising matters which are unlikely to be the most critical determinants of success. Consideration of matters in the first area becomes inevitable, and for some that can make the whole business even more daunting, especially if their first-lecture-ever has to be given next Tuesday. For the few it is so daunting that they steadfastly avert their gaze; blinding themselves to all consideration of the learner, they concentrate on the mechanics of their own performance, thus, temporarily at least, denying themselves the route to becoming a first-class academic teacher. They may teach a subject, but they do not teach students.

(2) J. Holt, How Children Fail, Sir Isaac Pitman and Son, 1964. Also now available in Penguin.

'Ways of evaluating choice'

I can best illustrate the third strand in the quest for self-sufficiency, that is ways of evaluating choice, by describing an item from the S.D.U. Organisation Improvement File. This file is simply a collection of procedures, a treasury in which we invite people to dip for ideas. The item that I am going to describe is adapted from a suggestion by A.N. Oppenheim at the London School of Economics.

It requires first a particular way of looking at a department, a matter which properly falls under the first of my three headings. It requires that the department is looked at from the point of view of how work is distributed among staff, and the implication that this distribution has of the relative values that department puts on its different functions.

A number of arrangements can be imagined for distributing, say, undergraduate teaching, graduate supervision, research, and administration.

Equal shares arrangement - all types of work and responsibilities are distributed to give approximately equal loads.

Specialisation arrangement - each member tends to take on the type of work he is good at or likes.

Compensatory arrangement - staff with heavy duties of one type are relieved of others; or possible work is distributed according to interest; for instance, those with a heavy teaching load may be relieved of administrative duties.

Seniority arrangement - tasks are arranged on an implicit value scale and are organised according to seniority. Frequently this takes the form of senior staff doing least teaching and most administration.

Development arrangement – staff are assigned work to form a progression of increasing complexity and responsibility so as to develop individual's capacities in all aspects of departmental and university work.

Haphazard arrangement – through no deliberate policy some staff just do more of everything.

Once these various arrangements have been made explicit it is possible for the staff of a department to discuss which they would prefer or which they believe to be most appropriate. That list may be regarded as their repertoire. They can go on to discuss which arrangements they believe they have and perhaps alight on a way of evaluating that judgement.

One way of evaluating the accuracy of the staff's belief of the kind of department that they actually have is, taking each of the kinds of work in turn, to arrange the staff in rank order according to how much of that particular kind of task they do. Those various rank orders may then be compared one to another (for the purists as the data are crude a simple rank correlation is probably least distortive, also tolerance levels are high as no great generalisations are to be drawn from the results).

Correlation of rank order of staff according to their involvement in different kinds of work and with seniority:

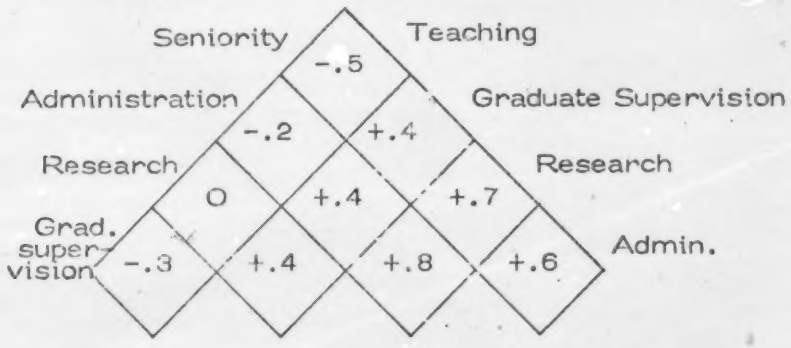

Diagram I

Diagram I shows the results obtained in one department. They suggest a department adopting the seniority arrangement with administration being accorded high prestige: the more senior a member of staff is the less teaching and the more research, administration and graduate supervision he is likely to undertake.

The described procedure is a crude way of evaluating individuals' percepts of the kind of department in which they work. It is only a first step towards evaluating whether the adopted arrangement is the one which best supports the general and declared purposes of the department. That it does or does not may be self-evident once this exercise has highlighted the relevant data and caused the staff to consider them. Otherwise some more or less formal empirical study may (just possibly) be worth mounting.

Innovation and Training

Those last examples illustrate the close relationship between staff-training and innovation, or rather between staff development and organisational development. It is a two-way relationship: innovation in organisational structure or in processes involves individuals in re-learning; but the perception of a need to change, and some ideas of how to bring it about, and the attitudes necessary to sustain the process of change, are also "learnable". Staff development programmes are a most potent means of bringing about change.

All that is very obvious. So obvious indeed, one might wonder why it is that a staff training programme is not a core activity in any university instead of being on the fringe, if it exists at all. The reasons why are old, deep, and murky and bear a good deal of scrutiny. Some I have hinted at earlier, but I used the term 'staff development' rather than training and I want to enlarge on the reason why.

Staff Development

I see the problem as one of reaching some reconciliation between an individual's desires, wishes, aspirations, hopes and the institution's requirements of him (which are sometimes styled as his needs).

Staff development I take to be a systematic attempt to harmonise the individual's interests and wishes, his carefully assessed requirements for furthering his career and the forthcoming requirements of the organisation within which he is expected to work. Thus it is of a somewhat broader reach than staff training.

My colleague on the S.D.U. programme, Ron Glatter, has provided a useful grid for considering the kinds of activities which might be involved.(3) I reproduce a somewhat amended version of it here.

	Organised within department	Central or extra-institutional organisation
On-the-job	Planned sequences of experience	Consultant helps on job analysis
	Job rotation	Visits from specialists
		Workshops
Off-the-job	Learning visits	Courses
	Staff seminars	Secondment
		Conferences

Diagram II

It makes the common distinction between on-the-job and off-the-job activities, but adds an often neglected dimension - that is, who should take the initiative in making provision, the department or some external organisation.

(3) R. Glatter, 'Off-the-Job Staff Development in Education' in Staff Development in Education: proceedings of the first annual conference of the British Educational Administration Society, Councils and Education Press, 1973

I will give examples to illustrate two of the quadrants.

1) On the job v. Organised within a department (top left)
e.g. Planned sequences of experience.

A professor in one of the universities represented on our programme has organised the various tasks delegated to his academic staff into a hierarchy of difficulty. He assigns duties according to his scheme not moving his staff on until he is personally satisfied that they are competent at the level at which they are operating.

Roles of increasing difficulty →

Tasks of increasing difficulty ↓

Lecturer	Tutor	Individual supervisor	Group supervisor
Specialised lecture	Subject-based tuition	2nd year projects	Seminars
Advanced lecture		3rd year projects	
Final year undergrad.		MSc course projects	Case studies
		MSc research	
First year undergrad.	Counselling personal problems	PhD supervision	Group projects

Diagram III

Of course there are a number of technical questions one might like to raise about this particular scheme: to what extent is the order of difficulty common to all staff, how far is the mastery of one stage a preparation for the next, what criteria of success would be appropriate and feasible? Nonetheless, the idea of trying to arrive at a planned progression of experience has much to recommend it.

2) On the job v. a central agency taking the initiative (top right).

As part of the S.D.U. programme, I am holding regular meetings with the staff of one university registry. Together we are analysing the work that is done and pinpointing difficulties that can be righted by the department itself especially during the training period of new staff.

A recent recommendation from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the University Grants Committee, the Association of University Teachers, and the National Union of Students was that departments should nominate one senior member of staff to be responsible for helping junior staff learn their job. One might hope that they would be responsible for guiding their department to a thoughtful combination of various approaches to staff development.

The Role of a Central Staff Development Unit

The examples I have given so far imply a balance of activity emanating from departments and from some central unit such as ours.

I believe a unit such as ours should consciously fill a number of functions.

A. It should be a centre for research, perhaps specialising in projects which cannot easily be conducted from within a particular faculty or institution (and for this it needs the protection of 'academic freedom' for it is bound to unearth some unpalatable findings).

B. It should be a centre for information to which teachers and administrators can turn (and here it needs links with a library).

C. It should go out of its way to stimulate, even precipitate initiatives on staff development at departmental level.

D. It should make some direct contributions to staff development.

I will enlarge on the last two only.

C. Encouraging initiatives at departmental level

1. We can help change climates of opinion.

(i) We invited 60 university institutions in England to nominate one senior academic and one senior administrator to join a group interested in staff development. We have had 42 members from 33 institutions take some active part in this group, which meets for two days once each term. They are divided into interest groups who between meetings undertake some staff development work within their own institutions, or work together on some project connected with staff development and some major innovation.

(ii) One problem reported to us by a number of institutions was a lack of people to man and chair university committees. We were asked to provide some way of increasing the general level of committees' skills among university staff. L.F. Evans, at the City University, is doing work on university committees. Together we have devised a training session based on a video-tape recording of a live University Senate meeting. The fact that one university not only allowed its Senate meeting to be recorded but has also allowed the tape to be shown in other universities has helped to make some senior staff less dismissive of the idea of recording their own meetings and discussing the way they conduct themselves.

(iii) The conference and this publication is another example.

2. Another way of encouraging initiatives is to provide commitments to peers.

We have invited various members of our senior staff group to be responsible for part of the programme of our meetings. This gives them a dead-line to work to and the people they are working for are those occupying similar positions to themselves in other universities but who meet regularly. In the U.T.M.U. workshop on Designing Courses we encourage participants to form contracts with each other to complete various portions of work by next time they meet.

3. Another strategy is to remove administrative load.

We have a group of staff concerned with the introduction or expansion of recurrent education programmes. We organise their meetings, invite the speakers they suggest, write their minutes, and type their report. We have another group who are writing undergraduate courses of 'Women's Studies'. In their own departments they could not ask the typist to take on their manuscript. We have shouldered the burden.

4. Another strategy is to help to organise people from different institutions to work together on the production of training materials.

One of the interest groups from our senior staff group has so far produced an in-tray exercise for university administrators simply by keeping copies of letters which they themselves have had to deal with but which they judge would provide some good learning points for one less experienced than themselves. We have also produced a number of case studies, by providing the manpower to write up an account of innovations at university level as they occur or soon afterwards.

5. We can occasionally provide some methodological expertise by working alongside individuals introducing changes in their departments. For example, members of the Unit have helped to design new courses. We hope to publish a number of these in the near future as case studies on course design.

D. Some <u>direct</u> contributions to staff training

1. We have run an extended workshop on Managing Change in Universities.

2. We have organised a short workshop for senior academics on some problems of running an academic department. (Again our central group were involved in suggesting the content.)

3. We should like to give some support to those members of academic staff designated as having special responsibility for helping junior teaching staff. We have

so far held a day conference on the matter and look to extending our activity.

Some prognostications

I would expect a shift in emphasis away from the provision of staff training by central groups towards departmentally-based schemes. Accordingly, I would expect the largest growth in well-established central units to be in activities concerned with stimulating initiatives elsewhere rather than on the provision of more and more short staff courses. The limitations of courses are well enough known and need not be elaborated upon; some of the more obvious are:

- they are not suitable for all learning needs;
- they assume a similarity between participants;
- they can deal only with general situations not the participants' particular problems (although the workshops to which staff bring problems from their own department go part way to overcome this difficulty);
- often a course cannot deviate far from the expectations and presuppositions of the course members, and in some cases this can be a severe limitation;
- there are 'transfer of learning' problems;
- there are 're-entry' problems when people return to their departments.

The drawbacks I mention apply especially to short courses; their effects are lessened in longer courses.

There is one development I would back against the general trend away from centrally organised courses; one direct contribution to staff training that can come only from a central organisation. I believe it is time we considered again a sustained educational course for teachers in higher education. To be successful such a course must be relevant to teachers' immediate experience and needs, and must be cheap to run. An 'in service' course would

meet the necessity of the second and the virtues of the first. One might consider for instance a two-year course involving some evening attendance for lectures and discussions but the bulk of the work being projects making up part of the participants regular work in his own college or university or polytechnic. London is an obvious centre for such a course with so many teachers within an hour's travelling distance of the centre. Such an idea is not new, it was floated by the U.T.M.U. some years ago - but it became stuck in the mud. A fresher breeze now blows; I believe that the University of London should look carefully at possible schemes, and the U.G.C. be ready to back a project as soon as they rediscover that old sock under the bed from which the S.D.U. project and others have been financed.

In all this we must however keep a weather eye on the efficiency of training or development schemes as a whole. Warr, Bird and Rackham[4] have drawn attention to the marginal effect training can have on performance, and that applies to manager training, administrative training and teacher training. Its benefits can easily be lost if other factors work against it. How well a person does his or her work depends on a host of factors:

- the intrinsic difficulty of the task;
- the characteristics of the staff or students with whom he has to work;
- his own personality, abilities, interests;
- the attitude of department or immediate boss. This can be vitally important and is often overlooked. Contrast the boss who spends time with a person who has returned from a course, finding out what it was about and discussing what implications it has for future work, with this description I had from one university staff man talking of his Head of Department. 'I despair of implementing any of the things I have learned,' he said, 'My prof., a self-made man who worships his Creator, rules the department with a whim of iron.'

(4) P. Warr, M. Bird, and N. Rackham, Evaluation of Management Training, London, Gower Press, 1970

- Other aspects of his motivation. Is he doing a job that he wants to do? Does he agree with departmental policy? Is esteem accorded him for achievement in all the activities his university wishes to encourage? For example insofar as our aim is the improvement of university teaching it may be that we can hope for little success as long as research conflicts with teaching and staff see the reward system as heavily biased in favour of research. Good will on the part of appointment and promotion committees may have little impact as long as evidence of teaching ability remains so much more suspect than evidence of research ability (or political skill).

- Opportunity. It is not uncommon to meet newly appointed lecturers feeling very harried because within a few days of taking up their first appointment they must needs launch on a course, with little or no opportunity to do more than reproduce part of the course they themselves not so long ago completed.

- Understanding. How clear is a person about what is expected of him or her? What initiatives is he expected to take? What support has he? What freedom of action?

- Choice of training. If a person is fortunate enough to take some training course, was it an appropriate choice?

These eight factors (plus others) have a direct effect on the standard of a person's work. None of them is the least bit affected by the quality of staff training.

It would be a pity if an interest in university staff training came and went much as an interest in student selection came and went in the early sixties because too much was expected of it.

Staff development is of vital importance and resources need to be invested in it; more so now that reductions in both financial and human resources leave less room for error, needless experiment, and self-indulgence. It is a time to invest money in staff training. Higher

Education should not ape the error of industry in withdrawing further from training as the first response to financial shortage. If we were to do that we can hardly argue against any agency which regards higher education itself as a national luxury for plush times.

Even though a number of us here have reason to be thankful to the U.G.C. for supplying funds it is something of an indictment that we are able to gather into one short conference the best part of what initiatives are being taken in staff training in universities, and I omit polytechnics from that only because the public sector has its staff college at Coombe Lodge and they are not represented among the papers of this conference.

I believe it true to say that no university in Great Britain knows how much money it spends on training its staff. It is quite certain that it is very much less than is usual for large organisations. The British Civil Service, for instance, provides some 1,000 places each year on ten week courses for Principal grade civil servants alone, yet 90% of civil service training is provided within departments rather than on courses.(5) The hospital service provide management training for administrative, medical, scientific and technical staff. The number of places on management courses for nurses has been estimated at 12,000 per annum.(6)

When I say that universities do not know how much they spend on staff training I am not referring to a complex analysis which takes into account a proportion of the salaries of staff involved, and some numerical cost of space used. Many do not know how much money is spent on sending staff on courses. Here I have specific points to make:

1. Most universities have no budget heading for academic staff training and consequently if a staff training scheme, or even some introductory seminars for new lecturers are set up the money has to be 'found'. One university I have visited has set up a committee to run a quite complicated introductory course. It has no budget, the organisers did not know from which budget heading their bills were actually paid. That was the Finance Officer's worry. This kind of approach means that the people interested in running a staff training scheme

(5) D. Keeling, 'Central Training in the Civil Service: some general issues' in Public Administration, Vol.50, 1972.

(6) T.W. Leggatt, The Training of British Managers: a study of need and demand, London, H.M.S.O., 1972.

are in competition with the rest of the university. They proceed by stealth, as an open debate on alternative measures and their costs might too easily precipitate an untimely refusal of funds.

2. Many universities make no special financial provision for sending staff to courses (even some who mention in staff contracts the need for probationary staff to attend such courses). Sometimes the fees for training courses come from the funds put aside to send people to specialist conferences. It is not unusual for a university to have a rationing scheme for such funds, which leaves a lecturer the choice between attending, say, the annual conference of a learned society or a staff training course. I would argue such arrangements are not in the best interests of the university let alone the staff concerned.

3. Large departments, especially those which have large equipment grants, find it relatively easy to produce the modest sums required to send people on courses. (Most of ours cost £3-£4, the most expensive is £18, plus accommodation). A small language department, with a few staff and no equipment grants, finds it much more difficult both to find the money and to cover for the absence of a member of staff. That may go some way towards accounting for the very noticeable bias towards the sciences and technology among the attendances on our courses. A university needs some positive discrimination to support the training needs of such departments.

Behind this lack of attention to finance lies a general attitude towards training. It is not a straightforward resistance to change or simple cussedness. There are some very real problems: some arising from differing opinions about the central purpose of universities and polytechnics; some arising from the inappropriateness or inadequacy of what those of us in staff training attempt, let alone manage, to offer; and some arising from the language and the metaphors we use. These are the problems which I believe we must investigate, debate, come to terms with if acceptance of staff training (which thankfully is growing rapidly) is to be met with sufficient sophistication.